



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 12 September 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
12 SEPTEMBER 1968

1. Israel-Egypt

The Israelis are stung by their losses in recent encounters with the Egyptians, and a retaliatory strike is in the cards.

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2. Czechoslovakia -
Soviet Union

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3. North Korea -
South Korea

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4. Soviet Union

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5. Cambodia

Sihanouk's advisers [REDACTED]
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reportedly told him recently that his position was slipping, that he might not be allowed back in Cambodia if he took his annual vacation in France, and that the National Assembly might call his bluff this time if he submits one of his pro forma resignations.

All this is symptomatic of the Phnom Penh establishment's growing dissatisfaction with the Prince's heavy-handed rule. Severe economic problems, mismanaged domestic programs, and the insurgency in the countryside will add fuel to the grumbling. Sihanouk's power remains formidable, however.



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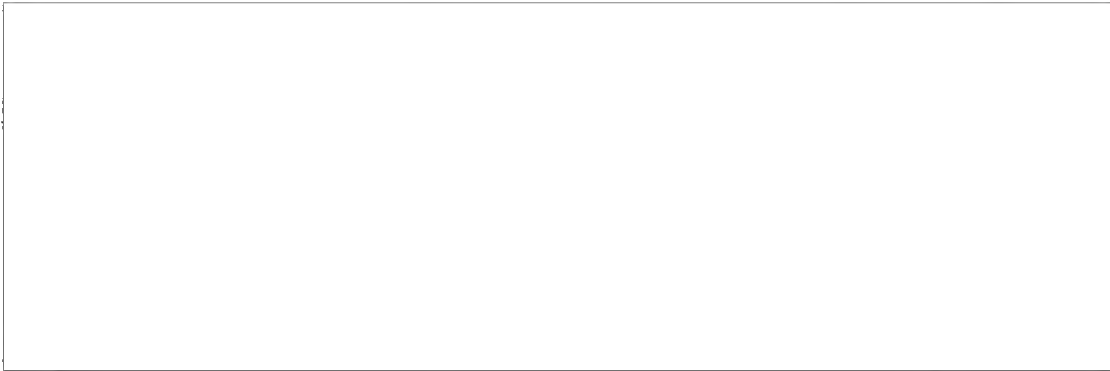
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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

12 September 1968

I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

Attitudes of Hanoi Delegates in Paris: George Kahin, director of Cornell's Southeast Asian program, interviewed North Vietnamese peace talk delegates during a recent visit to Paris in company with several other American professors. The delegates included Xuan Thuy and press spokesman Nguyen Thanh Le. On 9 September, Kahin gave the following impressions derived from the meetings to Governor Harriman:

--The North Vietnamese delegates are keenly interested in US politics and appear to have concluded that convention results foreshadow no dramatic changes in US policies.

--The delegates avoided a direct reply when asked if the "lull" had been politically significant. They did, however, call the American professors' attention to what they described as the "objective situation" during that period, namely, the country-wide decline in fighting and lower US casualties.

--When discussing South Vietnamese internal politics, the delegates made frequent reference to the Alliance. This gave the impression that Hanoi visualizes the Alliance as playing a complementary, if not co-equal, role with the Liberation Front in an eventual political solution in the South.

--The North Vietnamese said they found the Manila formulation on mutual troop withdrawals unacceptable because they understood "the other side" to apply to the Viet Cong as well as North Vietnamese forces.

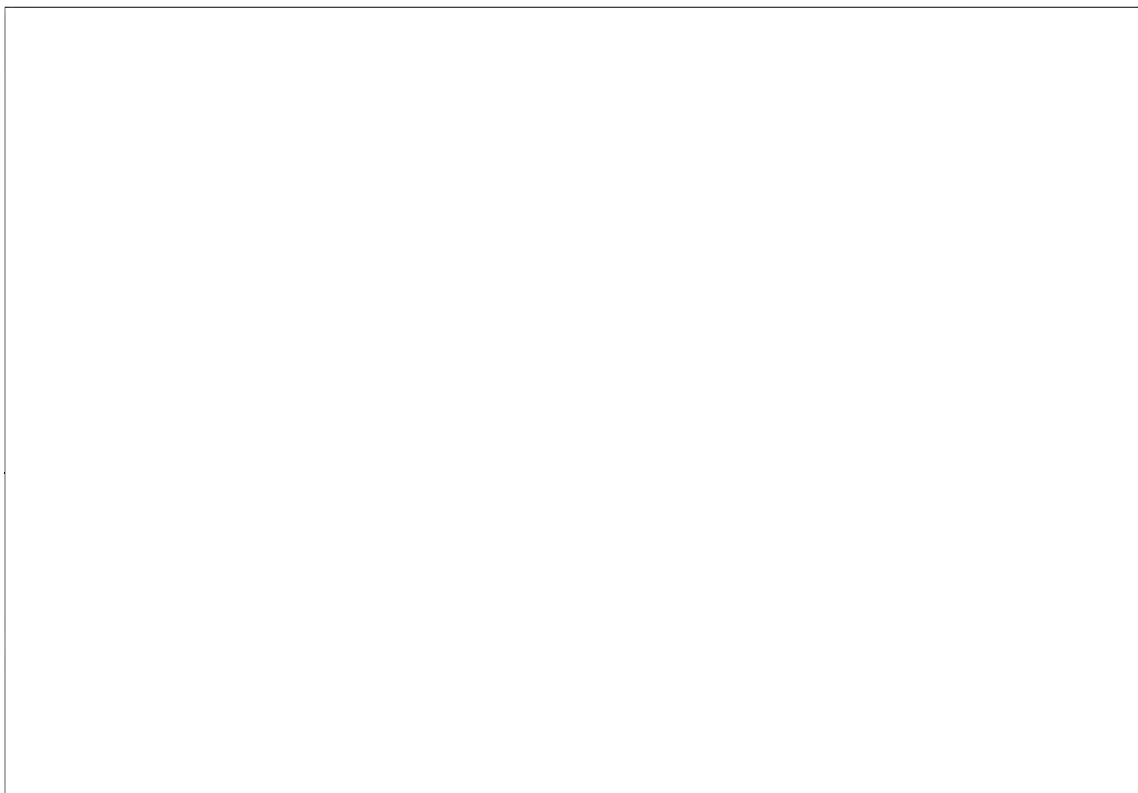
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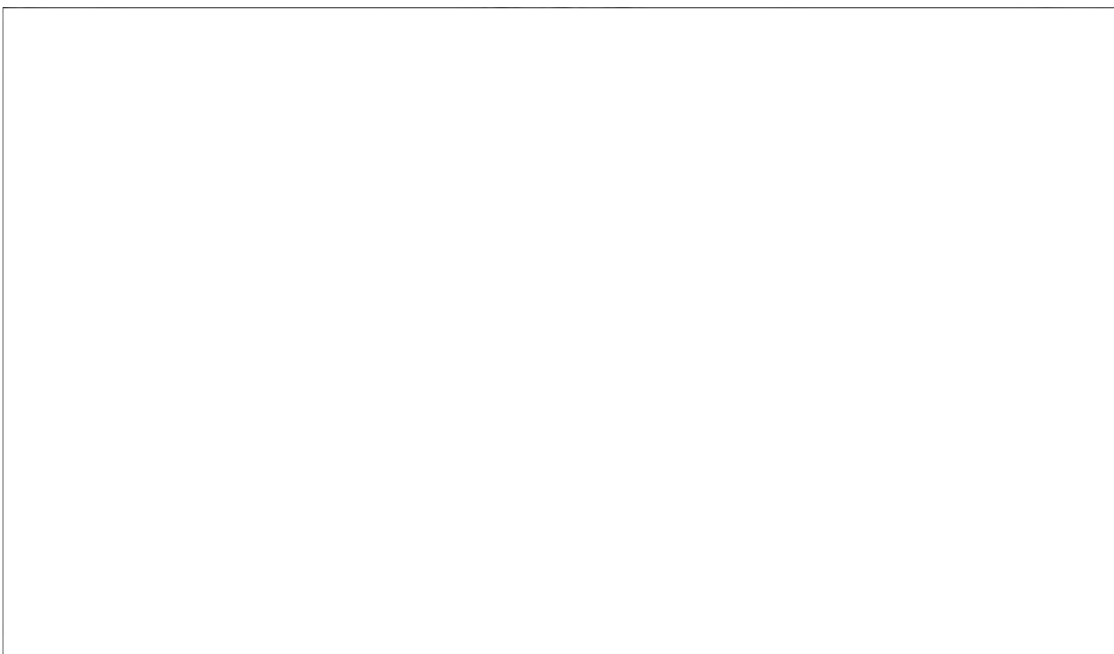
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Liberation Front Office in Paris: The French now expect 20 September to be the arrival date for the head of the Liberation Front's information office in Paris.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report today.

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